



# ***CITY NEWS***

Police Department  
455 N. Main Wichita, KS 67202  
(316) 268-4340 FAX (316) 268-4566  
[www.wichita.gov](http://www.wichita.gov)

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**DATE:** January 4, 2006  
**CONTACT:** Capt. Darrell Haynes  
Crimes Against Property  
(316) 268-4164

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **\*\* Media Advisory \*\***

### **Police and Secret Service ask for help in business scam**

The Wichita Police Department is requesting the public's assistance in a joint investigation with the local Secret Service Office, in which business owners are receiving unsolicited faxes inquiring if they want to sell their business and promising a free on-site consultation.

Several business owners in Kansas, including some in the Wichita area, have already been victimized and several thousand dollars have been lost in this scam, which promises a "third party valuation" under the guise of a money-back guarantee.

The fraudulent faxes primarily use the name of the **United Acquisitions Group, The American Group, USA Group** and **Global Business Acquisitions**, with a common description of *"the nations leading service in locating qualified businesses for a select group of serious buyers worldwide."*

This is how the scam typically works: when a business owner responds to the fax, they are contacted by a representative of a different company who schedules a time for a "business consultant" to come to their office for a meeting. During the meeting the consultant requests an advance fee for a "third party valuation" of the business. This advance fee is usually in the several thousand-dollar range.

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When the business owner becomes suspicious and requests a refund, he finds that the mergers and acquisitions company has denied the refund, or has disconnected their phone numbers.

Victims of this scam have been identified in Wichita, Salina, Garden City, Hays, Dodge City, and Overland Park, Kansas.

Anyone in the state of Kansas with information on this scam, or who believes they have been the victim of fraud from this scam, are asked to call WPD Detective Roger Williamson at (316) 268- 4496 or Secret Service Resident Agent Ron Emmot at (316) 267-1452.